United Nations S/2001/1195

Security Council

Distr.: General
13 December 2001

Original: English

# Twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

## I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 1370 (2001) of 18 September 2001, the Security Council requested me to report at regular intervals on progress made by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in the implementation of its mandate. The Council further requested me to report on how UNAMSIL would support the elections in Sierra Leone. The present report is submitted pursuant to those requests and covers developments since my eleventh report on UNAMSIL, dated 7 September 2001 (S/2001/857).

## II. Political developments

### Implementation of the Abuja Agreement

2. The peace process in Sierra Leone witnessed further progress during the period under review. The ceasefire continued to hold and the disarmament of combatants of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) was completed in 10 of the 12 districts of the country. The troop strength of UNAMSIL reached the authorized ceiling of 17,500 and the Mission has deployed in all districts of Sierra Leone. The Government continued to take steps to extend its authority to areas formerly controlled by RUF.

3. The joint committee on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, comprising UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and RUF, held three meetings to review progress in the disarmament process. At the first meeting, held in Makeni on 18 September, the joint committee declared the disarmament exercise completed in the main diamond-producing district of Kono and in Bonthe. The Government also reaffirmed its commitment to assist RUF in acquiring office space in the provincial capitals of Bo, Kenema and Makeni, to enable it to meet the criteria for registering as a political party.

4. At the second meeting, convened in Freetown on 11 October, the parties agreed to launch a programme for the collection of shotguns, which had been excluded from the original disarmament programme. The Government subsequently prepared a plan for the collection and destruction of those weapons, which are mainly in the hands of CDF and the civilian population. The parties endorsed the plan at the third meeting, held at Freetown on 8 November. Prior to the meeting, on 7 November, the Government had released additional RUF detainees, including two former cabinet ministers, as a confidence-building measure.

5. Meanwhile, the political parties in Sierra Leone are beginning to prepare for the forthcoming elections. In that connection, eight opposition parties held meetings to discuss the possibility of merging into a single party. With the assistance of the Government, RUF acquired office premises for its party in Freetown with the assistance of the Government, and also obtained offices in Bo and Makeni. At the invitation of the Government of Nigeria, five RUF party officials received training in political party management and democratic practices in Abuja as part of a programme to assist the movement in transforming itself into a political party. Nigeria has also offered to provide some office equipment for the RUF party offices.

01-69310 (E) 141201

### Regional aspects

6. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone continued the dialogue, which they opened in August 2001, with a view to building confidence among them. Defence and Security Ministers of the three countries met in Monrovia from 25 to 28 September and agreed to cooperate in curbing armed dissidents in the subregion and to deploy security units along their borders. Subsequently, Liberia announced that it had reopened its border with Sierra Leone, which it had closed in March.

7. On 16 November 2001, I met in New York with the Foreign Ministers of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, who briefed me on the dialogue between the three countries. They requested the United Nations to assist their countries in implementing the confidence-building measures agreed upon at their recent meetings and in reactivating the secretariat of the Mano River Union and supporting civil society groups that are promoting reconciliation in the subregion. I welcome this important initiative and appeal to Member States to extend all possible assistance to the efforts of the three countries.

### Coordination between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States

8. The Fifth Meeting of the Coordination Mechanism between the United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Government of Sierra Leone, in which I participated, was also held in New York on 16 November. The mechanism welcomed the progress achieved in the Sierra Leone peace process, but expressed concern that the inadequate resources and opportunities available for the reintegration of the disarmed combatants could jeopardize the upcoming elections. It therefore requested ECOWAS and the United Nations to dispatch a mission to the capitals of donor countries to urge them to contribute the resources needed for the reintegration programme. It also stressed that the assistance extended to RUF to transform itself into a political party should not contribute to the creation of an uneven playing field for the forthcoming elections.

## III. Military and security situation

9. The overall security situation in Sierra Leone remained generally stable during the reporting period. However, there were clashes between disarmed CDF and RUF cadres over mining claims in Kono District in late September. There was also a protest by ex-combatants in Freetown in early October due to a dispute over the payment of their reinsertion packages. While both incidents were resolved with the assistance of UNAMSIL troops, they underscored once again the urgent need to create reintegration opportunities for the ex-combatants.

10. In close coordination with UNAMSIL, the Sierra Leone Army deployed in key areas on the borders with Guinea and Liberia, including in the Kono, Koinadugu and Pujehun districts. The Army also deployed to new areas in the Port Loko and Bo districts.

### Deployment of the Mission

11. As indicated above, the troop strength of UNAMSIL reached its authorized full strength of 17,500 in November, enabling its troops to be deployed in all districts of the country. The Nepalese battalion, which arrived in the Mission area during the months of October and November, has assumed responsibility for the Moyamba and Bonthe districts.

12. In addition to assisting in the disarmament exercise and conducting robust ground and aerial patrols, UNAMSIL military personnel provided security escorts to the Sierra Leone Army re-supply convoys to Kabala in Koinadugu District and Bumbuna, in Tonkolili District. The peacekeepers also assisted the Sierra Leone police during its deployment to the Bombali and Kono districts. The Mission's Force engineers continued to rehabilitate roads in the eastern districts to facilitate movement of UNAMSIL patrols and to widen areas of accessibility by the humanitarian community.

13. UNAMSIL has thus successfully completed implementing its military concept of operations for the year 2001. The Mission is currently undertaking a reconfiguration of its deployments to prepare to provide support for the elections.

14. On 7 November, a UNAMSIL helicopter belonging to the Ukrainian contingent, which was travelling from the Mission headquarters to Lungi

airport, crashed into the sea shortly after take-off. The helicopter was carrying four crew members, two Zambian military officers and a Bulgarian United Nations volunteer. An extensive search and rescue operation was immediately launched and three bodies were recovered. Ukraine subsequently dispatched a team of divers and equipment and the wreckage was successfully recovered on 29 November with the speedy and generous assistance of Sierra Leone, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. No further bodies were recovered. An investigation into the cause of the crash is under way.

## IV. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

### Disarmament and demobilization

15. Since the resumption of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme on 18 May 2001, 36,741 combatants have disarmed (12,087 RUF, 24,456 CDF and 198 Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)/ex-Sierra Leone Army), as of 9 December 2001. The number of combatants who have disarmed to date has exceeded the initial estimated total of 28,000 and the final figure is expected to reach approximately 40,000. Although the unforeseen high number of additional combatants that have come forward to disarm may reflect success in the disarmament exercise, it has serious implications for the already precarious funding of the reintegration programme. A total of 13,500 weapons and 2.8 million assorted pieces of ammunition were collected during the reporting period.

16. The disarmament process has been completed in the Kambia, Port Loko, Kono, Bonthe, Bombali, Moyamba, Koinadugu, Tonkolili, Bo and Pujehun districts, as well as in the Western Area. The last phase of the process began in the remaining two districts of Kailahun and Kenema on 15 and 17 November, respectively. However, on 17 November, RUF leader Issa Sesay ordered his combatants to stop disarming in the two districts to demonstrate his disagreement with the outcome of the National Consultative Conference, which was convened from 13 to 15 November to discuss electoral issues (see paras. 33 and 34 below).

17. On 7 December, my Special Representative met with the RUF leader in Magburaka to impress upon him the need to advance the stalled disarmament exercise in the Kenema and Kailahun districts. Mr. Sesay presented new demands, including a call for the release of Foday Sankoh and the revival of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, which had been headed by Sankoh under the Lomé Peace Agreement. He also reiterated his demand for the establishment of a trust fund to assist RUF in transforming itself into a political party.

18. My Special Representative advised Mr. Sesay that his concerns could stand a better chance of being addressed if RUF completed the disarmament process, and the RUF leader eventually agreed to resume disarmament in the Kailahun and Kenema districts on 10 December. Due to the delays resulting from the RUF demands, the disarmament exercise in the two districts is now expected to be completed by the end of December 2001.

19. The implementation of the Sierra Leone police-led special programme for the collection of weapons (mainly shotguns), which had been excluded from the current disarmament process, began on 30 November. The arms are to be collected on a voluntary basis, with UNAMSIL providing storage facilities and assisting in the destruction of the collected weapons.

20. Following the completion of the disarmament programme in the coming weeks, it will be necessary to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the exercise. In this regard, a yardstick for measuring its success should be clearly defined, taking into account the quantity and quality of weapons submitted, the return of weapons seized by RUF from UNAMSIL and the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), as well as persistent reports that RUF may have moved some of its weapons and combatants outside Sierra Leone.

### Reintegration

21. Payment of reinsertion benefits, which are intended to enable disarmed combatants to settle in their communities while awaiting long-term reintegration, started on 15 October. So far, over 17,000 former combatants have received this benefit in Port Loko, Lunsar, Kambia, Freetown, Lungi and Koidu. Reintegration opportunities, however, remain

limited. To date, 13,741 former fighters, including those disarmed before the crisis of May 2000, have been absorbed in vocational and formal education programmes. More efforts, however, are urgently needed in this important area.

22. UNAMSIL and the Government of Sierra Leone are encouraging implementing partners in the reintegration programme to begin operations in the newly accessible districts. Pending the availability of long-term reintegration projects in these areas, UNAMSIL, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Kingdom are funding short-term bridging projects in some parts of the country where ex-combatant manpower is used in repairing roads and rehabilitating public buildings.

23. A total of 1,361 (65 per cent from RUF and 35 per cent from CDF) ex-combatants have been selected for reintegration into the Sierra Leone Army under the Military Reintegration Programme. The selected ex-combatants are currently undergoing training under the United Kingdom-led International Military Advisory Training Team.

## V. Governance and stabilization

### Extension of State authority

24. Following the deployment of UNAMSIL forces and the completion of disarmament, district and line ministry officials have returned to the Kambia, Port Loko and Koinadugu districts. All the Paramount Chiefs have returned to Kambia District. Displaced chiefs from the Port Loko, Kenema, Tonkolili and Bombali districts have also returned; most recently five chiefs from Koinadugu and 14 chiefs from Kono have returned to their chiefdoms with the assistance of UNAMSIL. The National Recovery Committee has set a timetable for the re-establishment of core administrative services in all newly accessible areas within three months of the completion of disarmament within those districts.

25. Capacity constraints remain a major impediment to the effective extension of State authority. Office facilities, accommodation and transportation for returning officials are very limited or non-existent. In support of the national recovery effort, UNAMSIL, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Kingdom and other partners are developing some quick-capacity packages aimed at providing minimum essential support for core services in the newly accessible districts.

26. During the reporting period, the Sierra Leone police deployed in the Kono and Bombali districts. The deployment of the police in Kono District was followed by the adoption by the Government of a policy on issuing licences for alluvial diamond mining and on controlling the movement of people to the diamond-mining districts. Police presence has also been reinforced in the Kambia and Koinadugu districts. While the national police force has set a target for deploying in every district by the end of January 2002, its present strength of only 6,500 would need to be expanded to provide adequate coverage throughout the country.

27. UNAMSIL and the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project launched a pilot project in the Western Area aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the local police. The project covers all facets of police operations, including the strategic and supervisory level, assistance to patrol officers, as well as traffic and criminal investigation.

28. Housing committees were set up in the Port Loko, Koinadugu, Kono and Kailahun districts to settle disputes arising from the illegal occupation of houses and land during the war, which has become a major source of community tension and an obstacle to the peaceful rebuilding of communities.

### Rehabilitation

29. In order to accelerate progress in social and economic rehabilitation nationwide, the National Recovery Committee has commissioned a series of assessment missions in the Kambia, Kono, Port Loko and Koinadugu districts. It is expected that all major areas of the country would have been assessed by the end of March 2002. These assessments are being used to set priorities and mobilize resources for rehabilitation, which is now under way in newly accessible districts with the support of donors and NGOs.

30. The National Recovery Committee also intends to use the assessment exercise to prepare for the next donors meeting. In doing so, the committee seeks to widen the circle of donor countries and institutions active in Sierra Leone. To that end, the Government,

together with UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Bank, are planning a donors conference for Sierra Leone in early 2002, to present the rehabilitation and reintegration requirements and to discuss future aid coordination arrangements.

31. Pursuant to the concerns expressed by the General Assembly and the Security Council on the impact of HIV/AIDS in the context of peacekeeping operations, UNAMSIL continued the intensive sensitization of its military and civilian personnel. A train-the-trainers programme for a selected number of peacekeepers in their respective areas of operation is under way. The UNAMSIL campaign against HIV/AIDS also includes a weekly programme on Radio UNAMSIL to educate the Sierra Leonean public about HIV/AIDS.

## VI. Elections

32. Under resolution 1270 (1999), the Security Council mandated UNAMSIL to support the elections in Sierra Leone, which are now scheduled to take place on 14 May 2002. As indicated in my previous reports, Sierra Leone's National Electoral Commission, which is responsible for organizing and conducting the elections, has requested the United Nations to provide technical and logistical support for the elections, including transport and communications, as well as overall security and a team to observe the electoral process.

### Current situation

33. Since my report of 7 September 2001 (S/2001/857), the National Electoral Commission has drawn up an electoral plan and a National Consultative Conference was convened in Freetown from 13 to 15 November to address core electoral issues, in particular the type of electoral system to be adopted. Representatives of all political parties, including RUF, as well as civil society groups and the Government participated in the conference.

34. The conference endorsed the date of 14 May 2002 for holding the elections and the district block electoral system (see para. 38 below) proposed by the Commission. It also stressed that the repatriation of refugees and the resettlement of internally displaced persons would be essential to the organization and conduct of credible elections. However, on 17 November, RUF leader Issa Sesay conveyed to UNAMSIL his disagreement with the outcome of the conference and claimed that RUF had rejected the district block electoral system.

35. It is envisaged that the draft bill on the district block electoral system will be put before Parliament in the coming weeks. Another draft bill aimed at codifying the existing disparate laws into a single electoral code will also be submitted to Parliament shortly.

36. The total number of eligible voters will be determined through voter registration. The identification of voter registration centres has already begun in the Western Area Urban (Freetown) and Rural, as well as in the Northern Province. The National Electoral Commission has indicated that the registration of voters originally scheduled to take place from 10 to 24 January 2002 will be delayed for approximately two weeks. The postponement is not expected to affect the other stages of the process, including the date for the presidential and parliamentary elections.

37. The National Democratic Institute, a United States-based NGO, and the Forum for Democratic Initiative, a Sierra Leonean NGO, have established a resource centre in Freetown to provide training, access to printing, as well as educational and media facilities for all eligible political parties and candidates participating in the general elections. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Commonwealth are also providing technical support to the National Electoral Commission, including overall management, legal and voter registration advice. The Commonwealth and IFES have also assisted the Commission in preparing a budget and strategic and operational plans.

### National Electoral Commission plans

38. Under the district block electoral system, the country's 12 administrative and two electoral districts will serve as electoral constituencies. Parliamentary representatives will be elected from party lists drawn up at the district level. According to the recommendation of the National Electoral Commission, an equal number of parliamentary seats

should be allocated to each district, irrespective of population size. The president will be elected directly by the national electorate based on party nominations, with the whole country serving as a single constituency. It should be noted that some opposition political parties have questioned the equal allocation of seats, as it does not reflect the population distribution in the country.

39. The 149 Paramount Chiefs will elect their 12 parliamentary representatives on 5 May. The electoral plan also provides for a special voting day on 8 May for police and other personnel scheduled to be on duty on polling day.

40. In principle, the National Electoral Commission has recommended that Sierra Leonean refugees register in their countries of asylum. However, the feasibility of such an exercise remains questionable. Moreover, it is unlikely that all countries of asylum will accept the proposed arrangement, which will also present major logistical and financial challenges. The Commission has also suggested that internally displaced persons be registered in their current camps but vote in their respective districts.

41. Nevertheless, the National Consultative Conference considered that the repatriation of refugees and the resettlement of displaced persons were essential to the organization and conduct of credible elections. In this connection, my Special Representative has held discussions with the representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone on the need to do everything possible to assist refugees who wish to return voluntarily before the election.

42. The National Electoral Commission has projected that the cost of the elections will amount to approximately US$ 11.6 million, of which the Government is expected to contribute $3.5 million, with the balance coming from donor countries. So far, the Government has paid a first tranche of $495,000 and a number of Member States and international organizations have pledged funds for the elections. However, there still remains a funding gap of $2,281,559. UNDP has set up an Elections Trust Fund to meet the shortfall in the Commission's budget, to which it has paid $250,000 as seed money.

43. The National Electoral Commission has proposed the timelines for the electoral process as follows:

- Identification of registration and polling stations: 15 November-31 December 2001;
- Voter registration, including the registration of refugees and internally displaced persons: 24 January-7 February 2002;
- Presidential and parliamentary elections: 14 May. If necessary, a run-off presidential election will take place thereafter.

## Outstanding concerns

44. The National Electoral Commission continues to face serious operational and political challenges which, if not addressed soon, could impair its ability to conduct the electoral process in an efficient manner. There are still a number of gaps in the Commission's preparations for the elections, which have hampered the efforts of UNAMSIL to finalize its plans for supporting the electoral process.

45. As currently proposed, 5,400 polling stations are expected to be established at approximately 3,000 locations throughout the country. However, the large number of registration and polling locations will impose a severe security burden on the Sierra Leone police. It may therefore be advisable for the police to consider static deployment of its personnel at registration and polling locations in the rural areas, while conducting security patrols for the polling locations in the urban areas where communication and accessibility are easier.

46. There is also concern that the two-week period allocated for voter registration may be too short, which could disenfranchise some eligible voters, particularly internally displaced persons and returnees. In this regard, it may be necessary for the National Electoral Commission to consider continuing the registration process beyond the current deadline.

47. Some civil society groups and political parties have expressed concern at the absence of continuous dialogue between them and the National Electoral Commission. Such dialogue is essential for ensuring the credibility of the electoral process, and I have asked my Special Representative to continue his efforts to facilitate it.

## United Nations role in supporting the elections

48. Given the limited capacity of the National Electoral Commission and the operational challenges facing it (some of which are described above), the United Nations is planning to extend technical and logistical assistance to the Commission and to provide general security support for the electoral process. In providing such vital assistance, the Organization will be mindful of the primary responsibility of the Commission to organize and conduct free, fair and transparent elections.

49. The UNAMSIL electoral component, which is currently being established, will closely monitor the electoral process and advise my Special Representative on whether the modalities are feasible and minimum international standards are being met at every stage. My Special Representative intends to use these assessments to draw the attention of the Government, the National Electoral Commission and other international partners to any shortcomings and recommend ways of overcoming them. This should help ensure that factors that could negatively affect the credibility of the elections are minimized. UNAMSIL will continue to play an active role in assisting the national stakeholders in reaching consensus on any major electoral issues that may arise.

50. UNAMSIL also intends to establish one electoral office in each of the electoral regions — the Western Area Rural (Freetown) and Urban (Freetown), the Southern Region (Bo), the Northern Region (Makeni) and the Eastern Region (Koidu) — as bases for electoral advice, support and monitoring activities. It is also intended that a total of 15 electoral officers will be deployed to these sites (3 at each site) beginning in early January 2002. In addition, up to 10 international Professional staff, assisted by the necessary General Service personnel, would be required at UNAMSIL headquarters. Consultancy funds would also be required for a period of three months for monitoring the provisions put in place for the counting system, as well as to ensure that specific public information activities are carried out and to provide support to international observers.

51. A determination on any observation role that the United Nations may play would depend on a further assessment of the progress in the electoral process. UNAMSIL, however, intends to provide, within available resources, assistance to international observers who may be invited by the National Electoral Commission.

## Security arrangements

52. The Mission, as currently deployed, is already providing "umbrella security" throughout the country in accordance with its military concept of operations for 2002, which aims to establish the necessary military framework for the elections. This security arrangement facilitates freedom of movement and promotes conditions in which the Sierra Leone police should be able to carry out its own security responsibilities effectively.

53. As mentioned above, the UNAMSIL military sector boundaries are being realigned with the electoral district boundaries, where practicable. This process should be completed by February 2002. During the voter registration stage of the electoral process, UNAMSIL will continue to conduct robust patrolling and maintain a flexible posture to respond to security needs, if required. It is envisaged that the necessary security support to the electoral process can be provided with the existing troop strength, possibly with minor adjustments to equipment capabilities.

54. During the polling period, UNAMSIL troops would be tasked to patrol more widely to promote confidence. Routinely, the sectors would maintain uncommitted company size reserves, and the Force reserve will continue to be at a high state of readiness. Exceptionally, UNAMSIL troops would be prepared to respond to situations of public disorder, with the Sierra Leone police taking the lead, but the United Nations troops would concentrate primarily on the provision of wider security and deterrence. UNAMSIL military observers would also conduct patrols and maintain liaison with other United Nations and Government of Sierra Leone agencies. In the event of a second round of the presidential election, arrangements would be made to maintain the electoral security arrangements for an additional period of two to three weeks.

## Role of the civilian police

55. The Sierra Leone police will be responsible for point security arrangements before and during the electoral process. Their obligation will be to ensure

that, inter alia, the voter registration, public campaigning, the casting of votes and their subsequent counting, and the installation of elected candidates are conducted in a safe and secure environment.

56. The role of the United Nations civilian police would be to advise and support the approximately 6,500 strong Sierra Leone police force in carrying out its election-related responsibilities. Initially, the civilian police would concentrate their activities on assisting the Sierra Leone police force in devising and implementing an electoral training programme for its personnel at the regional and district levels, as well as at headquarters. The training would focus on establishing security for public events, human rights and police conduct.

57. In order to accomplish the above tasks, the civilian police component of UNAMSIL, which currently has an authorized strength of 60 advisers, would require an additional 30 officers for a period of six months, bringing its total strength to 90. This increase in personnel would enhance the ability of the civilian police to support and advise the Sierra Leone police and offer assistance to 17 of its divisions. It would also enable the civilian police component to strengthen its capacity in each of the electoral regions for the purpose of liaising and coordinating on security issues.

## Public information assistance

58. The UNAMSIL Public Information Section has already begun sharing its technical expertise and extending its facilities to the Commission. It is assisting the National Electoral Commission in designing and implementing a civic education and public information strategy, which will be ongoing throughout the electoral process. UNAMSIL has also started regular coverage of the Commission's activities on Radio UNAMSIL. Additional radio transmitters, which are already in the Mission area, will be installed to extend the station's reach throughout the country.

59. During voter registration, UNAMSIL would assist the Commission by utilizing Radio UNAMSIL to educate voters, in local languages, on the registration drive. The Mission would also help the Commission design and produce print products such as posters, pamphlets and stickers. The focus of the Mission's public information activities during the political campaigning stage of the electoral process would be on creating a level playing field in the media for the candidates. Radio UNAMSIL will also provide the parties with a forum to explain their manifestos and programmes.

60. As the capacity of the National Electoral Commission in the areas of civic education and public information is severely limited, the UNAMSIL Public Information Section would be expected to provide technical assistance in these vital areas. Additional resources will therefore be required for the staffing of an elections unit within the Public Information Section, including one international officer and two national staff members. The unit will be the main interface with the National Electoral Commission and the electoral component of UNAMSIL on public information.

## Logistical aspects

61. At every stage of the electoral process, UNAMSIL would require some augmentation of its logistical resources, in order to support the more dispersed deployment mode of the military component of the Mission, as well as to provide for the contemplated increase in the civilian police component and to support the election-related activities of all other components of the Mission. Additional resources would also be required for the logistical support to be extended to the National Electoral Commission. This support would include transportation of electoral personnel and materials, storage and distribution of election materials prior to the election, movement of ballot papers following the election, limited logistic assistance to international election observers and support to public information activities, as described in paragraphs 58 to 60 above.

62. Based on the currently available information, preliminary assessments indicate that the specific areas in which these additional resources would be required include office accommodation and services, power generation, water purification, air and ground fuel as well as storage capacity, EDP and communications, air operations and light vehicles. A further detailed study of the requirements for additional resources to support the election-related activities of UNAMSIL will have to be carried out after the National Electoral Commission submits its final list of areas where support is particularly needed.

## VII. Human rights

63. During the period under review, UNAMSIL investigated and confirmed attacks that had been perpetrated by RUF on a village in Koinadugu District earlier on 20 August. The Mission's human rights officers also discovered and facilitated the release of a number of persons illegally detained by RUF in Makeni in October on the grounds of allegedly having committed criminal offences. Other allegations concerning the illegal detention of individuals by CDF in Kabala, Koinadugu District, are under investigation.

64. Following up on reports received from local villagers, UNAMSIL confirmed the existence of mass graves in the Masimera and Maforki chiefdoms in Port Loko District in October and November, respectively. The Mission has proposed to the Government methods and protocols for the preservation of the sites for further investigation by competent authorities.

65. UNAMSIL opened a second regional human rights office in the northern provincial capital of Makeni on 25 September. Three human rights officers have been deployed to the office. There are currently 15 human rights officers assigned to the Mission. The recruitment process for additional human rights monitors is under way, in consultation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

### Child protection

66. Since the beginning of the year, a total of 3,834 children, including 241 girls, have been released by the armed groups. The children were handed over to UNICEF-supported child protection agencies for rehabilitation and reunification. As more RUF-controlled areas are disarmed, reunification of children with their families has accelerated in the northern and eastern provinces. An international non-governmental organization, the International Rescue Committee, has established an interim care centre in Kono District to provide protection services to more than 600 separated children and demobilized child combatants. However, I remain concerned about the low percentage of girls released.

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission

67. UNAMSIL continued to conduct a sensitization campaign on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission throughout the country. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and my Special Representative have completed the process of selecting the four national and three international members of the Commission, whose names will be forwarded to President Kabbah for his approval.

68. The budget for the planned 15 months of operation of the Commission is estimated at $8.5 million. The High Commissioner for Human Rights intends to dispatch a mission to Freetown in January 2002 to determine what contribution the Government of Sierra Leone can make, before she launches a special appeal for contributions to the Trust Fund for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Commission is expected to commence operations in the first half of 2002.

### Special Court

69. After reaching an agreement in principle on the draft Agreement on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone and the statute annexed thereto (S/2000/915, annex), the Government of Sierra Leone sought to revert to the question of the temporal jurisdiction of the Court with a view to extending it back to 1991. Following consultations held between the Office of Legal Affairs and the Government, the Government has, however, agreed to conclude the Agreement without any change in the temporal jurisdiction as originally agreed. Formal confirmation of the Government's acceptance is expected shortly.

70. As of 5 December 2001, the Secretariat has received contributions in the amount of $14.8 million for the first year of operation, and pledges in the amounts of $13 million and $7.4 million for the two subsequent years. Thus there is still a shortfall of $1.4 million for the first year and approximately $19.6 million for the two subsequent years.

71. It has been the understanding of the Security Council and the Secretariat that the implementation of the Agreement on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone would commence only after it could be ascertained that sufficient contributions were in hand to finance the establishment of the Court and

12 months of its operation, and pledges equal to the anticipated expenses for the following 24 months. However, as I am convinced of the political will of Member States and their commitment to the success of the Special Court, I have taken the decision to authorize preparations for the operation of the Special Court beginning with the dispatch of a planning mission to Freetown from 7 to 18 January 2002.

72. The purpose of the planning mission will be to discuss with the Government of Sierra Leone the practical arrangements for the establishment and operation of the Special Court, including premises, the provision of local personnel and services, and the launching of the investigative and prosecutorial process. The mission will be led by the Office of Legal Affairs and will be composed of experts in all aspects of the operation of the Court, as well as representatives of the members of the Management Committee.

## VIII. Internally displaced persons and refugees

73. There are currently an estimated 510,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in the subregion, with some 200,000 in Guinea and Liberia, while within Sierra Leone 247,590 are internally displaced. As of October 2001, UNHCR has registered nearly 60,000 returnees in Sierra Leone while thousands of others have spontaneously returned, mainly to the Kambia, Kailahun and Kono districts. In addition, as of November 2001, an estimated 35,000 refugees have returned spontaneously to the Kambia District while elsewhere in the country there have also been reports of high levels of spontaneous returns. UNHCR has indicated that plans are in hand to assist in the increased voluntary repatriation of the refugees.

## IX. Enhancing the effectiveness of the Mission

74. UNAMSIL has continued to take measures aimed at enhancing its overall operational effectiveness. The Mission's working group on policy and planning, established in February 2001, has been considering critical issues and challenges affecting UNAMSIL and preparing recommendations for consideration by the Mission's leadership.

75. The Secretariat and my Special Representative have continued to hold regular consultations with the troop-contributing countries. My Special Representative has also maintained regular contacts with the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Konaré of Mali, as well as other leaders in the subregion, including President Obasanjo of Nigeria. Such contacts have led to their increased support for the political initiatives that UNAMSIL has undertaken. The Mission has also dispatched regular military liaison missions to Guinea to discuss troop deployments in areas close to the Guinean border.

76. In order to ensure more effective coordination of disarmament activities and a more active role in supporting the reintegration of ex-combatants, UNAMSIL has set up a multidisciplinary Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Coordination Section. The section liaises with the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and coordinates the activities of all components of the Mission that have a role in disarmament and reintegration activities.

77. Training and briefing programmes have been developed for all civilian and military personnel of UNAMSIL in the fields of health, human rights, gender sensitivity, child protection and rules of engagement, as well as on the mandate of the Mission. Special meetings have also been held with all international and national staff to keep them informed of developments in the Mission's operations.

78. The appointment in June 2000 of a Deputy Special Representative for Management and Operations has resulted in improvements in the management, logistic support and coordination of the Mission. The military and civilian integrated support service has been reinforced and reliable communications and electronic support facilities have been established throughout the Mission's area of operation. The self-sustainment and wet-lease arrangements with troop-contributing countries have been reviewed and their application made more flexible in order to ensure that contributors that are not immediately in a position to fully meet the established standards of self-sustainment are assisted by the Mission. Joint UNAMSIL/Secretariat evaluation teams have been set up to conduct pre-deployment assessments of new contingents. This procedure has facilitated the early identification of equipment deficiencies prior to the deployment of contingents to the Mission area.

79. In addition, the appointment in March 2001 of a second Deputy Special Representative with specific responsibilities for governance and stabilization has similarly strengthened the Mission's capacity to focus attention on peace-building, including the elections, as an essential complement to its peacekeeping role. This Deputy Special Representative also serves concurrently as Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP, thus bringing the various elements of the United Nations system together in support of common humanitarian and development goals and ensuring a more effective sharing of resources and information.

## X. Economic developments

80. The continuing improvement in the security situation, greater freedom of movement of people and goods, and increased resettlement and reconstruction activities have imparted considerable momentum to the recovery of economic activity that began in 2000, when the gross domestic product (GDP) of Sierra Leone increased 3.8 per cent. Preliminary data indicate that real GDP growth will accelerate to close to 6 per cent in 2001. There has been growing investor and consumer confidence as a result of the progress made in the peace process.

81. Power supply, while still severely constrained, improved significantly during 2001. Agricultural output is also beginning to increase. External aid flows financed a large recovery in imports and further contributed to the growth of domestic commerce and overall economic activity. At the same time, the Government continued to pursue sound fiscal and monetary policies. As a result, annual inflation has decreased throughout the year.

82. In September 2001, the Government presented its Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. On the basis of its improved macroeconomic performance, progress in implementing institutional and structural reforms, and the strategy articulated in the paper, the Boards of the Bank and the Fund agreed that Sierra Leone has met the eligibility criteria for access to debt relief under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. As a result, it is expected that Sierra Leone could qualify for interim HIPC debt relief by the end of the first quarter of 2002. In October 2001, Sierra Leone was granted external debt relief by the Paris Club on Naples terms, which reduced its outstanding debt to the Paris Club from $180 million to $45 million.

## XI. Financial aspects

83. I have submitted detailed budget proposals for UNAMSIL for the 12-month period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 (A/56/487) totalling $722,134,800 gross, including the amount of $275 million gross already authorized under the terms of General Assembly resolution 55/251 B of 14 June 2001, for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2001. The proposals do not include resources for the electoral process. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its related report (A/56/621) has recommended an amount of $692.0 million gross for the UNAMSIL budget, which is currently before the General Assembly for consideration.

84. Therefore, should the Security Council approve my recommendations in connection with the elections contained in paragraphs 32 to 62 above, the additional requirements for the electoral component of UNAMSIL will be sought from the General Assembly at its current session, if necessary.

85. As at 15 November 2001, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNAMSIL amounted to $317.1 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $2,098.7 million.

## XII. Observations

86. The peace process in Sierra Leone has reached an important juncture. A secure environment with increased freedom of movement, gradual returns of refugees, as well as a resurgence of economic activity in the provinces, is emerging as a result of the full deployment of UNAMSIL and the progress achieved in disarmament. At the same time, some important steps towards sustainable peace and stability are lagging behind, particularly the extension of Government's authority throughout the country, the reintegration of disarmed combatants, as well as the return and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons. While the forthcoming elections present another opportunity to consolidate the peace process,

the months leading up to the elections could be fraught with risks that may create tensions if the electoral process is not transparent and credible. The prevailing situation therefore calls for continued vigilance, as well as the concerted efforts of all concerned, to ensure that the elections are a success.

87. It is encouraging to note that the disarmament process is expected to be completed in the coming few weeks, if the parties remain committed to fulfilling their undertakings. Regrettably, RUF has slowed down the disarmament of its combatants in the two remaining districts, which raises questions about its intentions. I therefore urge the leadership of RUF to use the established mechanisms for dialogue, in particular the Joint Committee on Disarmament, to resolve any outstanding concerns they may have.

88. In the meantime, it will be necessary to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the credibility and effectiveness of the disarmament and demobilization process in the weeks following its completion. In this regard I commend the parties for agreeing to a programme to collect illegal weapons from the general populace and shotguns from the armed groups, which had been excluded from the disarmament process.

89. The limited availability of reintegration opportunities for ex-combatants, as a result of inadequate funds, remains a source of serious concern. The large numbers of additional combatants that have come forward to disarm will further complicate the challenges of reintegration. The recent clashes among disarmed fighters in Kono District and the protests in Freetown are a reminder that the months ahead could be fraught with tensions if the needs of the reintegration programme are not addressed urgently. Once again, I appeal to Member States to contribute generously to the World Bank-managed Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. The Government of Sierra Leone should also intensify its efforts in creating reintegration opportunities for the ex-combatants.

90. The principal objective of the deployment of UNAMSIL throughout the country remains to facilitate the Government's efforts to restore State authority, as well as law and order in the entire territory of Sierra Leone. The gains achieved through UNAMSIL deployment and the disarmament process therefore need to be matched by commensurate progress in restoring the Government's authority in areas formerly controlled by RUF. In this regard, the setting of a target date for completing the restoration of State administration in all districts in March 2002 is a welcome step. However, this important goal will be difficult to achieve unless the Government receives additional capacity-building support.

91. The ownership and leadership of the May 2002 elections belong to the relevant institutions of Sierra Leone, in particular the National Electoral Commission, which is responsible for organizing and conducting the elections. It is for these national institutions to ensure that the elections are free, fair, transparent and credible. The role of the United Nations and other international partners will be to provide support that will enhance the National Electoral Commission's capacity to organize and conduct the elections and to contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to the conduct of elections. In this regard, I commend the International Foundation for Electoral Systems and the Commonwealth for the early assistance they extended to the National Electoral Commission to strengthen its technical capacity.

92. In order to minimize the risks that accompany the electoral process, the National Electoral Commission must act expeditiously to address the outstanding concerns described above. In particular, it should maintain a continuous dialogue with all parties so as to ensure the transparency of the process and maintain a level playing field. The Sierra Leone police need to enhance their capacity to provide security for the polling stations. Sierra Leonean NGOs and civil society groups could also play an important role in enhancing the transparency and credibility of the elections. In this regard, these organizations could undertake more civic education and field local electoral observers both before and during the elections.

93. All political parties in Sierra Leone should be given a fair chance to compete in the elections. In this connection, I welcome the assistance that the National Democratic Institute, the Forum for Democratic Initiative and other international organizations continue to provide to all political parties. I also commend the Government of Nigeria for its contribution to the transformation of RUF into a political party.

94. Although the elections are an important watershed in Sierra Leone's quest for sustainable peace, they will not by themselves provide the final

solution to the crisis in the country. In the post-electoral period, several crucial elements of the crisis will require close attention, in particular the viability of State institutions and the ability of the Government to assume responsibility for the country's security. The ultimate goal of the efforts of the international community in Sierra Leone must be to leave behind well-established State institutions throughout the country, as well as security agencies that are capable of defending the country from both internal and external threats. It will therefore be important for the United Nations to remain adequately engaged in Sierra Leone after the elections, in order to protect the gains achieved.

95. Other major post-electoral challenges will include assisting Sierra Leone on rehabilitating its infrastructure, supporting national reconciliation and addressing impunity and accountability, as well as in resettling returnees and internally displaced persons. These areas will require substantial amounts of resources from the international community. I am confident that, given the efforts already invested in Sierra Leone, the international community will not leave the job half done.

96. The situation in the subregion, in particular within the Mano River Union (MRU), equally deserves sustained attention. It will be difficult to safeguard the achievements in Sierra Leone without stability in the MRU neighbourhood. It would therefore be important to support the promising dialogue that has been opened among Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and encourage them to convene, as early as possible, the summit meeting proposed by their respective Foreign Ministers. It is my hope that such a summit will develop a solid political framework for addressing the pressing issues affecting the subregion, in particular the disarmament of the still numerous armed groups.

97. I should like to thank all troop-contributing countries that have made it possible for UNAMSIL to achieve its full strength and deploy throughout Sierra Leone. I also wish to pay tribute to the United Nations peacekeepers who lost their lives in the service of peace in Sierra Leone during the period under review.

98. In conclusion, I wish to commend the people and Government of Sierra Leone, my Special Representative, and all UNAMSIL military and civilian personnel for the progress accomplished during the reporting period. I would also like once again to express my appreciation to ECOWAS, as well as to the donors and national and international NGOs for their unwavering support to the peace process in Sierra Leone.

# Annex

## United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 13 December 2001

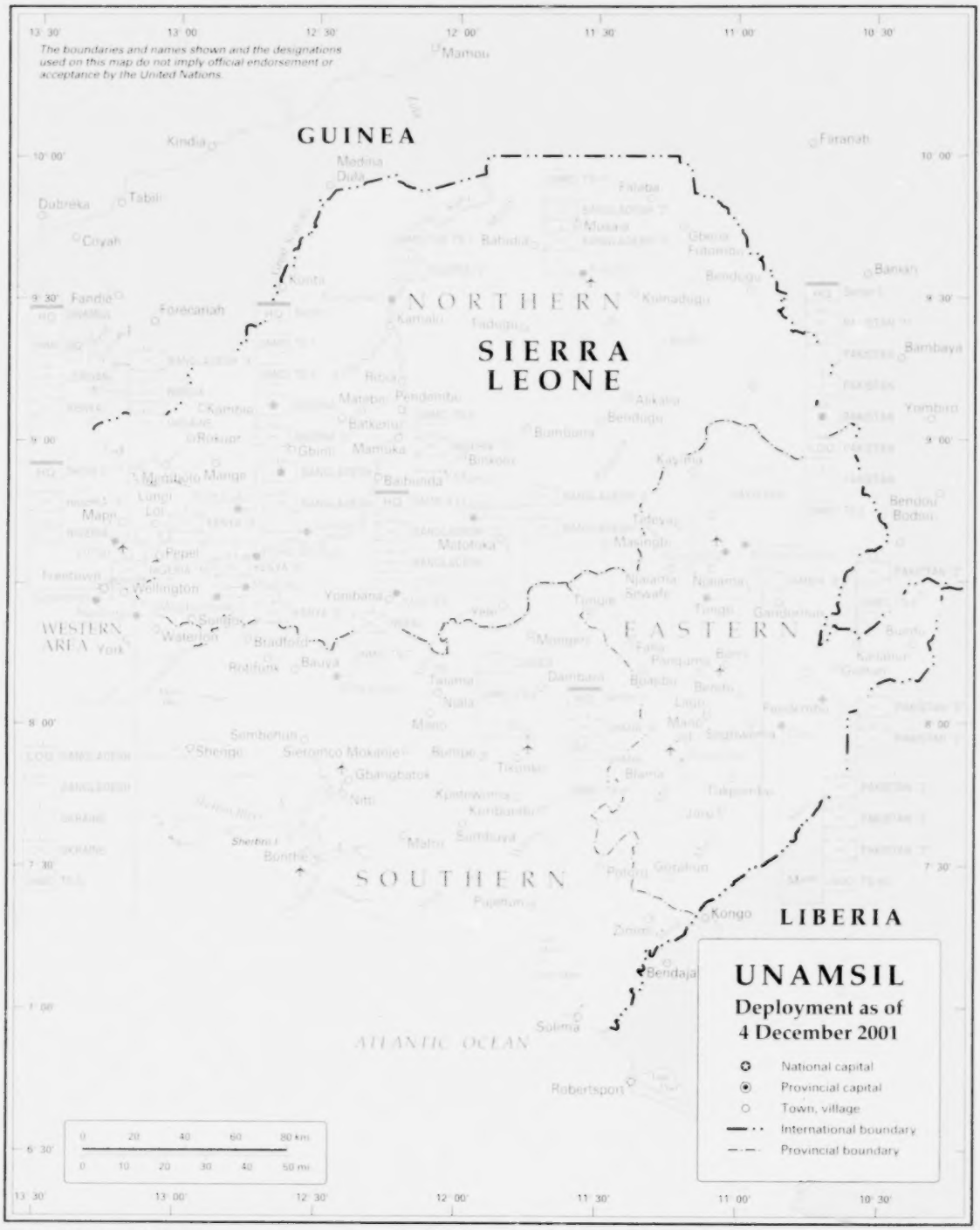
Authorized strength: Military: 17,500 (up to 260 military observers)
Civilian police: 60

| | *Military observers* | *Staff officers* | *Troops* | *Sector HQ staff* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bangladesh | 12 | 19 | 4 180 | 65 | 4 276 |
| Bolivia | 6 | | | | 6 |
| Canada | 5 | | | | 5 |
| China | 6 | | | | 6 |
| Croatia | 10 | | | | 10 |
| Czech Republic | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Denmark | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Egypt | 10 | | | | 10 |
| France | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Gambia | 24 | | | | 24 |
| Ghana | 6 | 10 | 850 | 58 | 924 |
| Guinea | 12 | 5 | 776 | | 793 |
| Indonesia | 10 | | | | 10 |
| Jordan | 10 | 2 | 118 | | 130 |
| Kenya | 11 | 17 | 992 | 63 | 1 083 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Malaysia | 10 | | | | 10 |
| Mali | 8 | | | | 8 |
| Nepal | 10 | 2 | 797 | | 809 |
| New Zealand | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Nigeria | 10 | 20 | 3 222 | 65 | 3 317 |
| Pakistan | 10 | 10 | 4 204 | 50 | 4 274 |
| Russian Federation | 15 | 5 | 109 | | 129 |
| Slovakia | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Sweden | 3 | | | | 3 |
| Thailand | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Ukraine | 5 | 5 | 618 | | 628 |

| | *Military observers* | *Staff officers* | *Troops* | *Sector HQ staff* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | 15 | 8 | | | 23 |
| United Republic of Tanzania | 12 | | | | 12 |
| Uruguay | 11 | | | | 11 |
| Zambia | 10 | 4 | 815 | 5 | 834 |
| **Total** | **260** | **107** | **16 681** | **306** | **17 354** |

Force Commander: Kenya; District Force Commander: Nigeria; Chief Military Officer: Pakistan

**Civilian police**: Bangladesh: 7; Canada: 2; Gambia: 2; Ghana: 6; India: 2; Jordan: 3; Kenya: 5; Malaysia: 3; Nepal: 5; Niger: 2; Nigeria: 3; Norway: 3; Senegal: 3; Sri Lanka: 2; United Republic of Tanzania: 1; Zambia: 4; Zimbabwe: 4; Total: 57.




Map No. 4132 Rev. 16 UNITED NATIONS
December 2001

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section